

your funds are sufficiently large to sustain, without inconvenience or stress, a probable loss.

6. A sound piece of advice may be thus expressed: When you have taken advice, do not take it. I have intentionally adopted a form of statement which looks contradictory, for the purpose of thus calling special attention to its importance. Men differ so considerably from each other in their views, their desires, their feelings and purposes generally, the ends they aim at, and (last, but far from least) the proportion between the total sum they possess and the amount of the particular investment under examination, that no one in advising can, with every genuine Intention, place himself completely and exactly in the condition of the person who is seeking advice. Hence the significant principle—running through all modes of action—that advice should be accepted, not necessarily to be strictly followed, but as a part only of the data—the facts and reasons—on which the inventor's own decision should be based.

In mathematical inquiries, where many observations of a fact are made of different degrees of exactitude, the observations are, as it is termed, "weighted," so that where one has been obtained under superior conditions of accuracy than another, the former is counted as (say) two observations in estimating the correctness of the aggregate result. Each piece of counsel received should be similarly adjusted—the advice of a particularly sagacious friend being reckoned, in proportion to his skill and knowledge, as worth the recommendation of two or three other friends. In this way we prepare* a tabular synopsis of advice and its indications, which, conjoined with our own inquiry and deliberation, will furnish a valid guide.

The well-known Ikmjamm Franklin adopted a wine plan (which he oddly described as Moral or Prudential Algebra) in the settlement of questions which presented difficulties of assessment: he ranged the individual reasons in favour of one course in a column, then those adverse to that course in an adjoining column; two- of the reasons in the one

column might be equal in their validity and
impressivont)HH to one in the other
column; the three then might be
cancelled: and thus cancelling and
balancing one against the other in this
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